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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Cedarville Business Professor Conducts National Research on Employee Communication**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** – When introducing new, and possibly anxiety-inducing, technology to a workplace, what's better -- a formal memo or a coffee break chat? Dr. Phoebe Tsai, assistant professor of information technology management at Cedarville University, wanted to find out.

In 2009, Tsai began conducting extensive research on formal and informal employee communication surrounding the introduction of new technology in the workplace. In January 2017, Tsai collected a new round of data. She submitted her findings to a prestigious academic journal for potential future publication.

Formal communication consists of management sharing information through meetings or newsletters. Informal communication, or "word of mouth," includes the classic "water cooler" conversations co-workers have during lunch and other breaks.

"Information technology (IT) has become indispensable for working professionals to tackle daily tasks," said Tsai. "IT not only increases personal productivity, but also facilitates team collaboration. Whether team members are in different cubicles or continents, technology allows them to build on one another's ideas and create synergy."

However, new technology can create a range of responses, from frustration and fear to excitement and anticipation. "Ease of use has been one of the foremost attributes that employees care about as they form a preliminary evaluation of a new technology," she continued. "If the new technology is perceived to be easy to use, the employee is more likely to see the technology as a facilitator instead of a hindrance to goal attainment."

Tsai's research concluded that formal communication is more influential in the responses of the employees to the new technology. The study also proved that enthusiasm is a stronger emotion than anxiety, if the employees anticipate the technology will make their jobs easier. This research highlights the importance of business superiors communicating effectively through formal outlets. When formal communication in the workplace is executed properly, employees will react positively and enthusiastically to the new technology in their job.

"These formally communicated messages allow users to establish preliminary, general understandings of the technology, which propels them to reach out to peers for gathering more detailed, localized information about the technology," said Tsai. "This information-gathering behavior will prepare them for using the technology with confidence and skills when the technology goes live later."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,963 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit [www.cedarville.edu](http://www.cedarville.edu).